

Afterwards Set married his sister Nephthys, and Osiris married his sister Isis.

Reigning as a king on earth, Osiris reclaimed the Egyptians from savagery, gave them laws, and taught them to worship the gods. Before his time the Egyptians had cultivation been cannibals. But Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, discovered wheat and barley growing wild, and Osiris introduced the cultivation of these grains amongst his people, who forthwith abandoned cannibalism and took kindly to a corn diet. Moreover, Osiris is said to have been the first to gather fruit from trees, to train the vine to poles, and to tread the grapes. Eager to communicate these beneficent discoveries to all mankind, he committed the whole government of Egypt to his wife Isis, and travelled over the world, diffusing the blessings of civilization and agriculture wherever he went. In countries where a harsh climate or niggardly soil forbade the cultivation of the vine, he taught the inhabitants to console themselves for the want of wine by brewing beer from barley. Loaded with the wealth that had been showered upon him by grateful nations, he returned to Egypt, and on account of the benefits he had conferred on mankind he was unanimously hailed and worshipped as a deity.¹ But his brother Set (whom the Greeks called Typhon) with seventy-two others plotted against him. His violent Having taken the measure of his good brother's body by stealth, the bad brother Typhon fashioned and highly decorated a coffer of the same size, and once when they were all drinking and making merry he brought in the coffer and jestingly promised to give it to the one whom it should fit

exactly. Well, they all tried one after the other, but it fitted none of them. Last of all Osiris stepped into it and lay down. On that the conspirators ran and slammed the lid down on him, nailed it fast, soldered it with molten lead, and flung the

others deny) that neither sowing nor *TEgy^l.* " *Essays and Studies presented to* planting should be undertaken." How- *William Ridgeway* (Cambridge, 1913), p. 456. As to the ever, these unlucky clays are not the unluckiness of true intercalary days of the Coptic intercalary days in general, see *The Scapegoat*, pp. 339 *sqq.* calendar, which occur in the second week of September at the end of the ¹ Plutarch, *Isis et Osiris*, 13 ; Dio- Coptic year. See C. G. Seligmann, *dorus Siculus*, i. 14, 17, 20; Tibullus, "Ancient Egyptian Beliefs in Modern i. 7. 29 *sqq.*